2: Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

• 551 593 607 We have further belief in various matters. People say: If husband and wife name each other's name, the children become deaf; therefore they do not name each other's name. And if a man and the wife of his younger brother, or a woman and the husband of her younger sister, or the wife of her younger brother name each other's name, they will not, it is told, burn when they are cremated after death; therefore they do not among us name each other's name. Husband and wife call on each other saying, father or mother of so and so child, and when they have not as yet got any children, they call on each other using some general expression[10].

[113]

[10] For a number of details in connexion with the customs here mentioned the reader is referred to the writer's paper 'On Taboo and Customs connected therewith among the Santals' in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. LXVII, Part III, 1898.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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Relationship by courtesy

i. Flower friendship

Santal girls enter into various artificial relationship with their friends and address them with the endearing names of many flowers and leaves. At some places, such friendships are called *Phul Patao* which follows a regular ceremony, when two girls of the same mental, if not chronological age, pledge themselves to a friendship till death does them part. The main events of such ceremonies consist in mutual presents of clothes, and merry feasts. The final knot is tied when the two friends stick a particular flower in the hair of each other. Henceforth the friends will address each other by their flower-names e.g., *Akar Baba* (a flower of a plant found in moist places, *Limnophila*, Roxburghiana, G. Don), *Keya phul* (a flower), *Karam phul*, *Karam Dàr* (the branch of a Karam tree), instead of their own names. Such friendships, very common in Bengal, have their prototypes among the Santals, for, we hear, they have such names for friends as *Gònga Jal* (the water of the Ganges). Enquiries revealed that men rarely enter into such ties and they are more common among the women-folk, who, sometimes even choose such friends from non-Santals.

ii. Between neighbours

A variant of such relationship, called *Nata*, is sometimes adopted between neighbours to pay

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husbands are strenuously resisted by the Santals, and the fact that the civil courts administer the Hindu laws of succession leads to many cases of tension. In practice, certain rights are conceded to women for "humanitarian" reasons. To daughters who do not marry—a rare but not unknown phenomenon—and to widows, with or without children, the right to maintenance is given. Since the woman on marriage becomes a member of another clan, the succession to land cannot be carried through her.

Ties of kinship determine standards of behaviour to a great extent. Life in community is an art to be learnt, and the Santal has his own rigid standards of right conduct. The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is one of deep intimacy and affection, which is no doubt fostered by the necessity for leaving the young children with the grandparents when both parents have to go out to work. The rules governing familiarity and its converse, avoidance, are based on kinship ties. The joking relationship, apart from grandparents and grandchildren, extends to his wife's younger sisters for a man and to her husband's younger brothers and her elder sister's husband for a woman. People within the circle of this relationship can talk freely with one another, indulging in jokes and calling each other names. Conversely, extreme care is called for in relationships which do not fall within this circle. A Santal child must behave with great respect to anyone who belongs to the same generation as his parents. Names are sparingly used between individuals, and relationship terms are the usual form of address. Husband and wife will on no account use each other's names, in distinction from the Hindu taboo, which is enjoined on the wife only. They behave circumspectly towards each other in public. A woman has to carry herself with care before her husband's elder brother. Her dress must at all times be properly arranged in front of him; she cannot sit with her legs dangling over the edge of a bed or the low veranda running round the house, her hair must be arranged, and she does not talk to him at all apart from the necessities of daily life. The rules extend to the finer forms of courtesy. Every Santal knows what is expected of him when he is meeting relatives—whether he has to make a deep obeisance to the ground before the person he has met, or whether he should wait for the other person to greet him first and then acknowledge the greeting by cupping his hands together and raising them towards his chest. A greeting between equals is performed by means of a

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A fourteen-year-old boy who was once asked his name replied: "By my name I cannot do anything." Pressed for some explanation of his words, he said: "By my name I cannot walk." It was then explained by some bystanders that the name by which he was known was *Leḍha*, "the lame one". There is a large number of figurative and hidden names for common objects. These names are used in conversation between those who are in the joking relationship with one another and particularly at the time of weddings. "White horse" is beer and "red horse" is spirits; "sheep's *ghi*"[1] is salt; "jackal's horn" is pepper; "frog spawn" is water. "We are sweeping the courtyard" means that we are washing our teeth; "Have you taken the harrow over the field?" means Have you brushed your hair? "Have you married off your middle son?" means Have you eaten your rice? There are many phrases to describe the evacuation of waste products from the body, one of which may be quoted. A man excuses himself from the company of his fellows with the words, "I am going to pay my rent!"

The Santal love of colour and decoration also gives expression to their sense of the joyous in life. Men are sparing in the use of personal adornment, though youths wearing ear-rings or necklaces made from seeds pass without remark. Women are fond of ornaments. Most of them wear a small flower-shaped brass ornament in the left side of the nose and have brass ear-rings. They all wear a *hasli* of silver or brass, a large ring that hangs round the neck. Bangles of silver, shell or glass are worn. They delight to fix flowers of red and white in their hair, and they enhance the lines of their eyes with a dark paste. On special occasions some of the heavier ornaments are brought out—large bell-shaped ear-rings, silver ornaments for the hair, anklets and rings for the feet and toes. The women also decorate the houses with gay-coloured patterns. The houses receive a new plaster coat of earth at the end of the rainy season in preparation for the Harvest festival. The house plinth or veranda and the wall up to a foot or two above the plinth are plastered a very dark grey, the colour being prepared by mixing cowdung with straw ash. Above this dark colour, on a first coat of light earth, the housewives vie with one another to attract the attention of their fellow villagers and of passers-by. There is no uniformity and the colours used depend rather on the coloured clays that are available in the neighbourhood of the village, but red predominates. Some house walls give

[1] Clarified butter.

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553 cry like crows and kites! In that case we call an *ojha* to tell us
[756] the reason and we say to him: 'See what this child is up to; why
[787] does he cry?' The *ojha* asks for oil, reads the omens and then says: 'Such and such a dead relative is claiming that the child be named after him.' This usually happens when we want to name the child after someone on the mother's side. The dead ancestors on the father's side do not like to have it so." The above passage occurs in a part of his diary where Babulal was reporting the birth of twins, for whose naming there are special rules. Twins are known as *boiga* children, and their advent is not regarded as a misfortune. He continued his narrative: "Today the babies did not cry at all, for they were to have *boiga* names." One explanation is that *Marak Buru* had twelve sisters who were twins, and I have been told that the children of *Cando* were
•551 twins. The pairs of names that are given to twins are drawn
845 from Hindu mythology and they are, for girls, Cita and Kapur, Dorgi and Porgi, Hisi and Dhumni; boy twins are named Ram and Lokhon, Loba and Kisur, Cand and Bhaira, Sidho and Kanhu. Most Santals when asked have denied categorically that dissimilar twins are posible. The only case met with in eleven years were twins born at the Mission Hospital in Sarenga, and it proved impossible to follow up their subsequent history.

551 The name given at the *chatiar* ceremony is known as the *bhitri*
iutum, which means literally the "inner" or "private" name. Everyone knows what his own inner name is, but it is little used by others. In addition to his private name each person receives at least one nickname, which is called the "upper" or "outer" name. This is necessary in part because of the prohibitions attaching to the use of names by certain categories of relations. If a boy has been named after one of his grandfathers, then all those who are prohibited by relationship from pronouncing the grandfather's name, e.g. the grandmother, are equally prohibited from applying that name to anyone else. Even those who could pronounce the name do not do so while the grandfather is alive, in order to avoid confusion. The nicknames given in early childhood do not remain fixed but are replaced by others as the boy grows up. Some result from the same kind of easy intimacy and teasing affection with which we are familiar in English society and are bestowed by those who stand in a
[177] "joking" relationship with the boy. A new element has been introduced through the naturalization of many Hindu names, particularly among those Santals who have received some edu-

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cation. In many cases Bengali names that bear some resemblance to the form of the private name come into use. Thus Poulo has become Padma Lochan and Kala has become Kalachand. Ernest Soren was known throughout the countryside by the name that he received at his baptism. At the time of his *chatiar* he was given the name of Singrai, this being the name of his paternal grandfather's elder brother. From the same time he was addressed as Jhongol, thus receiving not only the private name but the outer name of the same relative, who was not then alive. Before he could walk he was usually addressed as Thenta, a name that signifies a restless bundle of mischief. Later when he was growing up he was known by his contemporaries as Dangra Sorkar, or Sorkar for short. The name Sorkar is often applied to those who are going to school, but he was known as the "bullock" Sorkar because he did not conceal his fondness for beef, whereas educated Santals are generally supposed to conform to Hindu custom and shun it. Names of relatives are bestowed without regard to whether the relatives concerned are living or dead.

The village community takes no formal notice of the growing child after the performance of the *janam chatiar* until he is ready for the ceremony of initiation, or *caco chatiar*. *Caco* is a word that means a toddler, one who is learning to walk. The ceremony, however, is not performed until the child is growing up. It is somewhat misleading to describe the ceremony as one of initiation, for in comparison with the elaborate ritual with which initiation is accomplished in many parts of the world it is a pale and colourless proceeding. In the Bankura area the performance of the rite is of an extremely casual nature. It is nevertheless the equivalent for Santals of initiation ceremonies in other societies, and it retains its importance not because of the intrinsic character of the ritual but because of certain consequences that follow from its non-observance. Unless the *caco chatiar* has been performed, no Santal boy or girl may be married, nor cremated after death. It may be that the custom has been drastically modified because of the expense involved, as the whole village should be feasted. It is now customary for families to wait until the ceremony can be performed for several children at the same time, and it is therefore delayed until the impending marriage of the eldest child makes it inevitable. In the village of Barkul, Babulal recorded a case in which the father and the mother had been living together for some years without having themselves gone through any marriage ceremonial. For both of them it had